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devoted to religion. Philosophy, Mysticism & Science of Yoga

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PATHWAY TO GOD

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◆ Editorial Committee :
Shri P. D. Dharwarkar
B.Sc., C.Eng. F.I.E., M.A.S.C.E.
188, Tilakwadi, Belgaum-590 006
☎ : (0831) 465701
• *Editor-in-Chief*

Prof. Dr. I. S. Kumbar, M.A., Ph.D.
Reader & Head Dept. of Philosophy,
R. P. D. College, Belgaum.
☎ : (0831) 485674 • *Member*

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Prayer to Lord Rudra Shiva

(Stanzawise Translation in English)

नम आव्याधिनीभ्यो विविध्यन्तीभ्यश्च वो नमो ॥१॥
I salute the army that aims to strike at all around the area and also those who aim at particular spots.

नम उगणाभ्यस्तृँ हतीभ्यश्च वो नमो ॥२॥
I salute the army with special skills as well as the army meant to strike instantly.

नमो गृत्सेभ्यो गृत्सपतिभ्यश्च वो नमो ॥३॥
I salute the army which strikes ingeniously as well as the leaders of such an army.

नमो व्रातेभ्यो व्रातपतिभ्यश्च वो नमो ॥४॥
I salute those who gather the details of movements (of enemy) as well as leaders of such men.

नमो गणेभ्यो गणपतिभ्यश्च वो नमो ॥५॥
I salute the (striking) sections of the army as well as the leaders of such sections.

नमो विरूपेभ्यो विश्वरूपेभ्यश्च वो नमो ॥६॥
I salute the army of different formations and also army which has the formation which covers the whole universe.

नमो महद्भ्यः क्षुल्लकेभ्यश्च वो नमो ॥७॥
The salute the greatest of warriors as also the ordinary soldiers.

नमो रथिभ्योऽरथेभ्यश्च वो नमो ॥८॥

I salute those who occupy the chariots as well as those who have no chariots.

नमो रथेभ्यो रथपतिभ्यश्च वो नमो ॥९॥

I salute the chariots and also those who command the chariots.

नमः सेनाभ्यः सेनानिभ्यश्च वो नमो ॥१०॥

I salute the army as well as the commanders of the army.

नमः क्षत्तृभ्यः संगृहीतृभ्यश्च वो नमः ॥११॥

I salute those who make the chariots and also those who assemble them.

नमस्तक्षभ्यो रथकारेभ्यश्च वो नम ॥१२॥

I salute the shapers as well as the architects of the chariots.

नमः कुलालेभ्यः कर्मारेभ्यश्च वो नमो ॥१३॥

I salute those who work with the clay as well as the blacksmiths.

नमः पुंजिष्टेभ्यो निषादेभ्यश्च वो नमो ॥१४॥

I salute those trap by snares and also the hunters.

नमः इषुकृद्भ्यो धन्वकृद्भ्यश्च वो नमो ॥१५॥

I salute the makers of the arrows as well as the bows.

नमो मृगयुभ्यः श्वनिभ्यश्च वो नमो ॥१६॥

I salute those who go for hunting as well as the keepers of (hunter) dogs.

नमः श्वभ्यः श्वपतिभ्यश्च वो नमः ॥१७॥

I salute the (hunter) dogs as well as the owners of these dogs.

□□

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Thus Spake Gurudeo...

SIN : Duryodhana throws the responsibility of his bad actions on God. Take the following verse from the Pandava Gita :

जानामि धर्मं न च मे प्रवृत्तिः, जानाम्यधर्मं न च मे निवृत्तिः।
केनापि देवेत हृदि स्थितेन, यथा नियुक्तोऽस्मि तथा करोमि ॥

This is as much as to say, that a man may commit sins, and throw the responsibility on God who is the maker of all things. Such an attitude to sin is absolutely irresponsible. It is only a facile way of escaping from one's own sins. This vicarious doctrine may take the shape of throwing the responsibility either on Nature, or on society or on God. It is Nature which compels me to do bad actions, says Richard III. It is on account of the influence of society, says another. It is God who makes me do all evil deeds, says Duryodhana. The real attitude of Duryodhana, however, is not simply that of throwing the responsibility on God, but that of giving despising and defiant challange to the power of God.

(Pathway to God in Hindi Literature, P.19-20)

*According to Sharifsaheb, our Āsana, the posture upon which we sit for meditation, is to constitute the pedestal of the charkha. Our two sympathetic cords, the Ravi and the Shashi, Ida and Pingala as we said sometime back, should constitute the two poles of the Charkha. Now the spokes of the wheel are held in position by the ten Vayus (*दहा वायुगळेंब नुलिगळ विगिदु*), and the Charkha is to be set in motion.*

(Pathway to God in Hindi Literature, P.164)

□□

EDITORIAL

Religion and Society

All the religions, the ancient and the later ones, had the same goal viz. to mould the individual into an upright, truthful, dutiful and an useful entity so that the society can be built up into a live, healthy and economically prosperous unit which can fulfil the variety of needs and requirements of its constituents as well as the comforts and pleasures of the individuals. The religions also nurtured the faith in God and utilised the concept of God as the giver of happiness to the righteous persons and unhappiness and punishments to the evil doers. There was no differentiation between individuals before God and all were equal leading to equality and fraternity.

The religion had thus a two-fold function : to uphold morality and human values amongst the individuals of the society and inculcate faith in God as a basic quality of the heart.

The sages of the Indian civilization further developed the theories of rebirth, incarnations, existence of various deities and the Karma - the Sanchit, Poorva and Kriyamana - as the cycles of cause and effect lingking births & re-births, through their experiential studies in meditational practices and Samadhi states. Rituals for worship of the various deities for individual and family benefits also followed side by side with the practice for spiritual progress through moral and mental discipline and meditation. All these factors were interwoven in the social fabric through customs & festivals and imprinted in the psychic of the society, to be followed by the individuals in their life as per their capabilities and natural inclinations. The sages were Sanyasins, yogis and seers with great wisdom and intellect. They were held in reverence by commoners and kings alike. They remained aloof from the society but saw to it that the society remained on the right track and the kings ruled with justice to all.

After the Mahabharat war, that is about five thousand years ago, the sages knew, through their seer's instinct, that the aeon of Kali, that is, the period of disorder and strife has begun and nobody will be in a mood to listen to their same advice and time has come for them to retreat from this world. Most of them cast off their gross bodies and remained in their subtle bodies while some retreated to caves where nobody could find them. The management of the religion then passed on to the priesthood, who knew more about ritual worships rather than the high human values laid down by the sages.

As was natural in the circumstances, more emphasis was laid on details of worship and prayers for family benefits rather than for spiritual progress. Ignorance about the high human values led to misinterpretations of the scriptures and practices harmful to the society. The society was on the way to down fall and degeneration. Education was monopolised, artificial caste barriers were created, temples for salutation to God were not open to all and the heinous custom of untouchability was practised. Not that there were no philosophers and intellectuals in the society who knew that all these were wrong practices against the scriptures and will lead to disintegration of the society, but they remained silent probably because of fear of excommunication by the priesthood which meant that no priest will perform any religious rites in their families.

The first attempt to remove these wrongs from the Hindu fold was by Goutam Buddha himself. He had an impressive personality, he was compassion incarnate with intense sympathy towards the downtrodden. His speeches had a magic-effect on the masses as well as on learned pundits, many of whom became his followers. He never claimed to be an incarnation of God but said he is one from amongst the masses, and is convinced that one can reach the higher states of existence by one's own efforts without the prayers and rituals. He was against the misinterpretations of scriptures and wrong practices then prevailing in the Hindu society but never wanted to start a new religion. As Dr. Radhakrishnan said 'He was born a Hindu and died a Hindu.' The Buddhist religion was started by his disciples after his Nirvana. The religion spread far and wide all over Asia due to the strong appeal of the human & rational values propounded by him.

Ādi Shankarāchārya was once coming out of the Ganges river at Benaras after his bath and climbing up the steps of the Ghat, when he saw a man with unclean clothes, obviously an out caste considered untouchable standing in his way. He shouted at him to go away from his path not to make him unclean after his bath. The man asked who is clean and who unclean, the body or the soul ? Shankarāchārya looked at him. It is said that he had the vision of Lord Shiva Himself in the form of the untouchable man. He embraced the man and asked for pardon.

All over the country, people were fed up with the differentiation created between man and man by the priesthood. In Punjab, Guru Nanak started a new religious sect, the Sikh Panth to face the atrocities of the moghuls. Everybody was considered equal and all had free access to the Gurudwara. Once Samarth Ramdas Swami, on his all India travel on foot, wanted to see Guru Gobind Singh. Guru Gobind Singh had gone out and was to return soon. Ramdas Swami was asked to wait. When Guru Gobind Singh arrived, Ramdas Swami was surprised to see him an horse back with a number of horsemen with swords following him. Ramdas Swami asked him "You are a Sanyasi and how come that you are heading an army ?" Guru Gobind Singh replied that he is a Sanyasi at heart and has no desire to do all this. "But I cannot keep quiet when my men have to face the atrocities of the moghuls. I have to fight alongwith them." He presented Ramdas Swami with a weapon which could be cancealed in the stick he was carrying and said "You are travelling alone. If need be, do not hesitate to use this". Even to-day, the Sikh warrior race is one of the best in the country.

Seeing the misinterpretations of scriptures and practices like untouchability of the Hindu priesthood, Swami Dayanand Saraswati started the "Arya Samaj" to follow the true spirit of the vedas, with no differentiation between man and man. With similar motives, Shri Basaveshwar Prabhu started the Veershaiva religious sect in the South with equality & brotherhood amongst all.

When Chatrapati Shivaji was to be coronated, the local priesthood refused to perform the rites saying Shivaji does not belong to a warrior race. Shivaji who was fighting the muslim armies all throughout his life and had carved out an independent kingdom, had to face this situation. But he was a cool headed man. He knew that he belonged to Rajput origin. He sent two emmissaries to Rajputana (Rajasthan) to find out the lineage. They brought the proof that he belonged to the Shisodiya dynasty. Still the local priesthood was adamant. The emissaries went to Benaras the highest seat of religion in India. The Shankarāchārya held a meeting and decided that Shivaji be coronated. He sent a special priest Gāgā Bhatt from Benaras to perform the coronation ceremony. The coronation ceremony was performed and Shivaji was declared the King. But the matter did not end there. Those priests who favoured the coronation were excommunicated by the other priests. Quite a few brahmin families who were excommunicated had to embrace Islam due to the severity of the excommunication. Quite some of them were reconverted at the instance of Shivaji. Such was the self-destructive thoughtless egoistic behaviour of the priesthood.

It was only under the British Rule that the monopoly of education was broken and the schools were open to all. There is an interesting story to this. In a primary school in Dharwad, a low-caste boy wanted admission. The teacher was in a fix. According to the govt. rule, the boy has to be admitted. But if he did so, he feared excommunication by the priesthood. He wrote about his dilema to the head of the education dept. The plea went to the Governor of Bombay, then to Viceroy and to Privy Council in London, because the British rulers never wanted to interfere in religious matters. The Privy Council gave a ruling that under the rule of the British Queen, no child can be refused admission to the school. The boy was admitted but was made to sit at a distance from the teacher as well as other boys. Mismanagement of the religion had reached its peak.

Saints like Dnyaneshwar and Tukaram were persecuted by the priesthood on flimsy grounds. It is said that Dnyaneshwar asked permission to take Samadhi three times from his Guru and elder brother Sant Nivruttināth. Once when the priesthood refused to perform his thread ceremony Nivruttinath persuaded him to engage himself in rendering Bhagwadgeeta into Marathi language. When this was completed, he approached for permission for Samadhi for the second time. Again, Nivruttināth asked him to write Amritanubhava. After this was done, Nivruttinath had no more excuses & he gave the permission. It may not be far from truth to say that due to the thoughtless behaviour of the priesthood, the Indian society lost a Yogi and learned Sanyasi at the very young age of twenty.

For the last about three thousand years the high human values laid down by the sages got erased from the social behaviour and remained only as words in written books. The ignorance and egoistic behaviour of the priesthood divided the society instead of uniting it into a close brotherhood. As a result, today's Indian Society, even after fifty years of independence is reported to have only less than 30% honesty by the world statistician authorities. Though the first lesson of the vedās was सत्यं वद । धर्मं चर ॥ (speak the truth and act dutifully) our society has lost the basics of morality and ethics. It is a credit to the Christian and Buddhist nations that their religions have maintained an honesty level of around sixty percent & above for the last two thousand years. Our defence minister is reported to have said recently "Other nations do not take us seriously because they feel that we are not a strong nation. We have more enemies inside our country and cannot take a firm decision. Moreover, we are porous & corrupt."

Ways & means can be found out to retrieve the situation and we can become a strong nation, only if we show a determination to act accordingly. It must be remembered that morality cannot be brought by govt. It is the function of the religion and religious education. Meditation on virtues like honesty, speaking truth, dutifulness, integrity etc. for atleast a month at a time need to he preached and got practised to imprint them on the mind. A renaiscence is essential to bring back the Society to its value-based structure that was prevalent in the ancient Indian Civilization. If we do not take the name of God for a decade, nothing will go wrong. God will continue to do His work. But morality and ethics are essential to run the society on proper lines and must be given a priority.

□□

After the war is over, in India, we have to address ourselves to the removal of three things, "Casteism, Corruption and proliferation of religion in all affairs".

- Subhash Chandra Bose to captain of the submarine,
which took him from Germany to Japan.

(Continued from last issue)

Śankarācārya's Ātmabodha

(Sanskrit Script followed by English translation)

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अतद्-व्यावृत्ति-रूपेण वेदान्तैर्लक्ष्यतेऽव्ययम् ।
अखंडानंदमेकं यत् तद् ब्रह्मेत्यवधारयेत् ॥५७॥

One should surely know that to be that Brahman which is pointed out by the Vedānta-texts with the method of Atad-vyāvṛtti, which is non-perishable, which is partless and bliss (or which is fully perfect bliss), and which is (only) one (57).

Explanation : This word Vedānta means Upaniṣads, as the latter form the concluding portions of Vedas. The Upaniṣads while describing the nature of Brahman use the words "na iti" i.e. not this, not thus i.e. different from this world. This is here indicated by the words the method of Atad-vyāvṛtti. The latter is to be explained thus :- Tad means Brahman. Atad means that which is not tad i.e. Brahman. Thus 'atad' means that which is not tad i.e. Brahman. Thus the word 'atad' stands for everything that is considered to be different from Brahman / Ātman. The word "vyāvṛtti" means act of separating, making different, excluding. Thus the word "atad-vyāvṛtti" means making Brahman separate/ distinct from everything else, excluding everything from Brahman. Such "atad-vyāvṛtti" is intended by the Upaniṣads, with the use of words "Neti Neti". i.e. The

Upaniṣads point out that Brahman is distinct from everything in the world. All things, all plurality in the world is illusory and hence perishable, while Brahman is true and imperishable or eternal or permanent.

There is a reading "advayam" in place of "avyayam". Brahman being only one, it is non-dual, one without a second principle beside it. There is nothing except Brahman.

Brahman is "akhaṇḍa". The latter word has been already explained under Verse No.36. Brahman is pure joy without a trace of pain. Or we can take Brahman to be "akhaṇḍānanda", constant / eternal bliss. The bliss of Brahman is never exhausted.

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अखंडानंदरूपस्य तस्यानंद-लवाश्रिताः ।
ब्रह्माद्यास्तारतम्येन भवंत्यानंदिनोऽखिलाः ॥५८॥

All beings beginning with Brahmadeva become happy, to more or less extent, resting upon (more or less) portions of joy of that Brahman whose joy is constant / partless / complete (58).

Explanation : Permanent / perfect bliss is the nature of Brahman. On it is superimposed the world which consists of Name and Form. Thus consciousness, existence, bliss, name and form are found[56] in the world, so says Śaṅkarācārya in his Sarva-vedānta-siddhānta-sārasaṅgraha. Depending on the partial bliss of Brahman, beings like Brahmadeva become glad. Really speaking it is wrong to say that the beings derive delight from the external objects. Delight is within the beings; it is the Self. The so-called sensual pleasure is a mere small part of Brahmānanda, delight of Brahman.

Under Verse No.10, there were mentioned different names of Ātman from cosmic point of view. The name[55-A] 'Sūtrātmā' occurs there. This Sūtrātmā is the same as Hiraṇyagarbha or Brahmadeva. This Brahmadeva is considered to be the highest of all living beings.

The purport of this verse is : Whatever joy is secured by living beings like ants, insects, serpents, human beings, gods, Brahmadeva originates from the joy of Brahman and it is a partial one.

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तद्युक्तमखिलं वस्तु व्यवहारश्चिदन्वितः ।
तस्मात् सर्वगतं ब्रह्म क्षीरे सर्पिरिवाखिले ॥५९॥

All things in the world are associated with or are accompanied by that (Brahman). The business/dealing (of all living beings in the world) is accompanied by consciousness (of Brahman). Brahman therefore is at all places, as ghee is present in the whole milk (59).

Explanation : As seen under Verse No.58 above, the existence, sentience and joy of Brahman are found in the world which is superimposed on Brahman. In other words, all things in the world possess existence; living beings have sentience, and they enjoy and joy of Brahman. Thus all things have all the features of Brahman. Hence it can be said that all things are united with Brahman. All the worldly dealings of human beings require sentience i.e. empirical dealings depend on the basis of consciousness of Brahman. As seen already, the Brahman is the basis (adhiṣṭhāna) of the entire universe;

hence it is at all places, it is all-pervading, it is immanent in the universe.

The immanence of Brahman in the world is here illustrated with the example of milk and ghee. The ultimate cause of ghee is milk. i.e. ghee is an effect and milk is its material cause. According to the Satkārya-vāda accepted by Monism-alone, the effect even before its production is in a subtle form present / existent in its material cause i.e. an effect is in a subtle form present everywhere in its material cause. Thus ghee the effect even prior to its production pervades milk, its material cause.

Here the example of milk and ghee is to be understood as far as its aspect of "pervasion" is concerned. Brahman from real / transcendental point of view is neither the material cause nor the efficient cause of the world. Brahman is merely "vivarta" - cause of the world; it is only basis (adhiṣṭhāna) for the super-imposition of the world. Thus as adhiṣṭhāna Brahman is allpervading (sarva-gata) i.e. it pervades everything in the world.

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अनण्वमस्थूल मह्रस्वमदीर्घमजम व्ययम् ।
अरूप-गुण-वर्णाख्यं तद् ब्रह्मेत्यवधारयेत् ॥६०॥

One should surely know that to be the Brahman which is not atomic, which is not gross, which is not small, which is not broad / long, which has neither birth nor death, which has neither form / size nor quality / attribute nor colour nor name (60).

Explanation : Brahman is completely different from the world. No word or adjectival phrase is able to describe Brahman. Hence Upaniṣads say that the Brahman is "nor such (na iti), not so (na iti)". If somebody asks : "How is Brahman?." The reply would be : Brahman is not like anything in the world. So if at all Brahman is to be described, it is to be described negatively. So this Verse describes Brahman in negative terms. By saying that Brahman is not atomic, etc. it is intended to show that Brahman cannot be fitted in the frame of things in the world. To explain :-

Things in the world are either atomic or have some form / size - big or small, narrow or broad or long, have some colour and quality, and are subject to origin and destruction. As opposed to this, Brahman is not atomic, neither small / narrow nor big / broad / long; Brahman has neither any colour nor any attribute nor any name. Brahman is unborn and imperishable. In short, Brahman is not like anything in the world.

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(61)

यद्-भासा भास्यतेऽर्कादिर्भास्यैर्यत् तु न भास्यते ।
येन सर्वमिदं भाति तद् ब्रह्मेत्यवधारयेत् ॥६१॥

One should clearly understand that to be that Brahman due to whose light (luminous objects like) the sun, etc. are illuminated, (but) which is not illuminated by the things that are illuminated (by it), and which illuminates this entire world (61).

Explanation : Brahman is different from the world, and it illuminates the whole world. In this world, there are luminous things like the sun, the moon, etc. The latter illuminate other things i.e. they make other things the objects of knowledge; for a thing is cognised when there is sufficient light. But these luminous objects like the sun, etc. are illuminated by Brahman; the sun, the moon, etc. shine due to the light of Brahman. The point is :- Knowledge is not possible without sentience-Brahman. The sentience-Brahman makes the sun, etc. known. But the things like the sun, etc. which are illuminated by sentience-Brahman cannot illuminate Brahman. i.e. they are not able to make Brahman the object of knowledge. In short, Brahman alone illuminates[56] everything in the[57] world. This idea is pointed out by Upaniṣad as well as the Bhagavadgītā.

To be brief :- Brahman is sentience. Due to that very sentience, things in the world become the objects of knowledge.[58] Thus the Brahman illuminates the entire world, but Brahman is not illuminated by the things in the world. Brahman is self-luminous.

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(62)

स्वयमंतर्बहिर्व्याप्य भासयन्नखिलं जगत् ।
ब्रह्म प्रकाशते वह्नि-प्रतप्तायस-पिंडवत् ॥६२॥

Illuminating the whole world, after pervading it within and without by itself, the Brahman remains shining, like an iron-ball heated by fire (62).

Explanation : As basis (aḍhiṣṭhāna) Brahman is everywhere. It has pervaded the entire universe within and without. It is both immanent and transcendental to the world. By its own light it illuminates the world. Its light is not exhausted in the act of illuminating the world. It itself goes on shining while it is illuminating the world.

This is illustrated with the instance of an iron-ball heated by fire. An iron-ball was thrown in blazing fire. It became hot inside as well as outside. That is, the fire pervaded it within and without. Further, fire made the iron-ball illuminated. But light of fire was not exhausted in illuminating the iron-ball. Fire by itself remained shining. Brahman is like the fire. Illuminating everything in the world, it by itself remains shining.

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Such Brahman is the only ultimate reality. If there appears anything as apart from Brahman, it would be false. This fact is declared in the following Verse No.63.

(63)

जगद्-विलक्षणं ब्रह्म ब्रह्मणोऽन्यन्न किंचन ।
ब्रह्मान्यद् भाति चेन्मिथ्या यथा मरु-मरीचिका ॥६३॥

Brahman is absolutely different from the world. (Further) there is nothing apart or distinct from that Brahman. (So) if there appears anything different from Brahman, then that thing, like the mirage, is false (63).

Explanation : Brahman is the fundamental reality. On it is superimposed the world. So the world appears to be different from Brahman and Brahman appears to be distinct from the world. But the fact is that there is nothing true or real as apart from Brahman. For Brahman is the only truth; it is the only existing thing. Under these circumstances, it there appears something different from Brahman, it will not be true. A thing that seems to be distinct from Brahman must be false. Now the world appears to be different from Brahman; hence it must be false. This can be proved with an inferential reasoning :- whatever appears to be different from

Brahman[59] is false. The world appears to be different from Brahman. Therefore the world is false.

Mirage is here given as an example to illustrate the falsity of the world or falsity of everything that appears to be different from Brahman. Basically there is only sandy region. Thereon appears water. Now, if there is nothing except sandy region, then the water that appears to be different from the sandy region must be false. Thus, if the world appears to be different from Brahman, then it would be false.

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The point mentioned in Verse No.63 above is reiterated with different words in the next Verse No.64.

(64)

दृश्यते श्रूयते यद् यद् ब्रह्मणोऽन्यन्न तद्[60] भवेत् ।
तत्त्व[61] ज्ञानाच्च तद् ब्रह्म सच्चिदानंदमद्वयम् ॥६४॥

All things which are seen and are[60] heard (in this world) are not different from Brahman. Through true/right knowledge[61] (one comes to know that) that Brahman is existence-sentience-bliss, and non-dual (64).

Explanation : Through nescience the world appears on Brahman. Now the question is :- Are these things different from Brahman? The reply is in the negative. A snake appears on a rope. But the superimposed snake is not different from the rope which is adhiṣṭhāna. The superimposed snake has no independent existence apart from the rope. Similar is the case with the world and Brahman. The world which is superimposed on Brahman has no independent existence as apart from that of Brahman. As seen in Verse No.63 above, the world as appearing distinct from Brahman is false. In that case then what is true/real ? The reply is :- Brahman is the only one true/real basic principle. The knowledge of that true principle is the knowledge of Brahman. Through that knowledge of Brahman a spiritual aspirant comes to know that Brahman is non-dual, is only one, is without a second, and that this Brahman is existence-sentience-bliss, and that there is no true things apart from Brahman.

• • •

Here a doubt may arise : If Brahman/Ātman is inside and outside of the world and if it is true, then how is it that it is nowhere seen and known by us ? How can it be said that Brahman is the true principle ? This doubt is removed in the next Verse No.65.

(65)

सर्वगं सच्चिदानंदं[62] ज्ञानचक्षुर्निरीक्षते ।
अज्ञान-चक्षुर्नेक्षेत भास्वंतं[63] भानुमंधवत् ॥६५॥

He who has got the vision of knowledge sees the all-pervading (Brahman which is) existence[62]-sentience-bliss. (On the contrary) just as a blind man does not see the[63] refulgent (shining) sun, so also a man with the eye of ignorance will not see (Brahman/Atman) (65).

Explanation : The spiritual aspirant alone who through "hearing, thinking and constant meditating" has realised Brahman sees the all pervading Brahman that is existence, sentience and bliss. For he has obtained the peculiar vision of knowledge. He sees the Brahman as existence.[64] In other words, he who has come to possess an eye in the form of knowledge can see Brahman everywhere. On the contrary, one who is ignorant i.e. one whose internal eye is covered by ignorance cannot see Brahman anywhere. For instance, the sun is shining. But a blind man cannot see him. So also a man whose eyes are enveloped by darkness in the form of ignorance/ nescience cannot see Brahman anywhere.

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What happens to the individual soul who has secured the Self-knowledge is described in the next Verse No.66.

(66)

श्रवणादिभिरुद्दीप्त-ज्ञानाग्नि-परितापितः ।
जीवः सर्व-मलान्मुक्तः स्वर्णवद् द्योतते स्वयम् ॥६६॥

An individual soul who is heated by fire in the form of knowledge blazing due to śravaṇa etc. and who has become free from all dirt/defilement (in the form of passions) shines by himself (as Self) like the (heated) gold (66).

Explanation : Gold, when it comes in contact with or is mixed with baser things, becomes impure. To make it pure : first of all it is cleaned and then heated in a crucible. Consequently as the dirty-baser portion is removed/burnt out, the gold becomes pure and then it shines in its own original bright colour.

Similar is the case with an individual soul. The individual soul was first affected by Nescience. Hence he slipped down from his own original nature as the Self/Brahman, and then came under the influence of egoism, and then started to entertain passions like love, attachment, anger, hatred, etc. and hence became impure/soiled/defiled. So in order to remove the impurity, the individual like the gold is to be heated. So the individual soul undertakes threefold process of "hearing, thinking and constant contemplating". Then fire in the form of knowledge of the Self arises and it burns down to ashes all impurities gathered over the individual soul. Then he becomes free from all dirt/ impurities. When he becomes fully free from all impurities, his original form as the Self starts to shine by itself. In other words, when Nescience, egoism, passions, etc. are removed from the individual soul, he becomes manifest as the self-luminent Self.

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(67)

हृदाकाशोदितो ह्यात्मा बोध-भानुस्तमोपहृत् ।
सर्व-व्यापी सर्व-धारी भाति भासयतेऽखिलम् ॥६७॥

The Ātman risen i.e. manifest in the heart-space (of a man) is the same as the sun in the form of knowledge, and he removes the darkness (in the form of Nescience). He is all-pervading and all-supporting. He himself shines and he illuminates all other things (67).

Explanation : The realisation (sākṣātkāra) of Ātman is not first of all possible in the external world, though Ātman is everywhere. First of all a spiritual aspirant has to realise Ātman in the heart-space in his own body. This heart-space is nothing but the sentience-space (cidākāśa) in the brain-portion.

This Ātman is of the nature of knowledge. This knowledge is here compared to and identified with the sun. Just as the sun removes darkness, so also the sun in the form of the Self removes the darkness in the form of Nescience. Further, this knowledge not only shines by itself, but illumines all things (See Verse No.62). This very Ātman as the basis (adhiṣṭhāna) of all is allpervasive and is the support of all.

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References :

54. Birth is association of an individual soul with a body and death is his dissociation from a body.

55. See :- अधिष्ठानं परंब्रह्म सच्चिदानंद-लक्षणम् ।८७९
तत्राध्यस्तमिदं भाति नामरूपात्मकं जगत् ।
सत्त्वंचित्त्वं तथानंद-रूपं मद् ब्रह्मणस्त्रयम् ॥८८०
अध्यस्त-जगतो रूपं नामरूपमिदं द्वयम् ।
एतानि सच्चिदानंद-नामरूपाणि पंच च ।८८१
एकीकृत्योच्यते मूरर्वैरिदं विश्वमिति भ्रमात् ॥८८२
(शंकराचार्य सर्ववेदांतासिद्धांतसारसंग्रह)

55-A. Also See :- एतत्समष्टि-उपहित-चैतन्यं सूत्रात्मा हिरण्यगर्भः प्रापश्च इति उच्यते । (सदानंदकृत वेदांतसार); एतत्-समष्ट्युपहितं चैतन्यं सफलं जगुः । हिरण्यगर्भः सूत्रात्मा प्राण इत्यपि पंडिताः । (सर्ववेदांतासिद्धांत सारसंग्रह, ३८७-३८८).

56. न तत्र सूर्यो भाति न चंद्रतारकं नेमा विद्युतो भांति कुतोयमग्निः ।
तमेव भांतमनुभाति सर्वतस्य भासा सर्वमिदं विभाति ॥ (कठउपनिषद्, २.२.१५; मुंडक उपनि. २.२.१०; श्वेताश्वतर उपनि. ६.१४)

57. न तद् भासयते सूर्यो न शशांको न पावकः । (भगवद्गीता, १५.६)

58. विश्वं प्रकाशयत्यात्मा तेनासौ न प्रकाश्यते । (शंकराचार्यकृत - तत्त्वोपदेश, १५).

59. यद् ब्रह्मणः अन्यद् भाति तद् मिथ्या । जगद् ब्राह्मणः अन्यद् भाति । तस्माद् जगद् मिथ्या ।

60. Here the potential form namely "bhavet" is to be under-stood in the sense of the present tense.

61. The word "tattva-jnāna" can be taken in another sense namely knowledge of Brahman which is Tattva.

62. In place of the word "saccidānandam", there is a variant reading namely "saccidātmānam". Then the meaning would be :- A person having the eye of knowledge sees the all pervading Ātman that is existence-sentience.

63. The Poona-edition of Ātmaboḍha reads "bhāravantam" which is obvisouly a misprint. The real word is "bhāsvantam" meaning brilliant or luminous.

64. See :- Siva i.e. Brahman as existence is all-pervading (सद्रूपने शिव पैसावदानू । श्रीगुरूलिंगीता, २४.१)

(To be Continued.....)

- Prof. Dr. K. V. Apte

Yajurved Apartment, ST Colony Road,
Vishrambag, Sangli-416 415.

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Sublime, Holy and Intuition

1. Introduction :

In his book, 'The Bhagavadgita as a Philosophy of God - Realisation', Gurudev R. D. Ranade has remarked "------- how Kant's idea of the Sublime, Otto's idea of the Holy and our own idea of Intuition stand on the same level."

As regards Intuition, Gurudev states in the same book "------- Now the sense in which I am going to use it and in which it is used in contemporary thought is that super-sensous faculty which goes beyond reason and which puts us in possession of things unknown to reason. The faculty by means of which we can enter into the spiritual life is intuition. It might correspond to what Saṁkaracharya calls 'Anubhuti'. -------"

In this article we have made an attempt to state what Kant implied as Sublime in his Critique of Judgement, what constitutes Holy according to Rudolf Otto, and the Intuitively envisaged sublime vision of Cosmic- Ātman Viśvarūpa by Arjuna as depicted by Gurudev in his above referred book, so that the impetus of Gurudev's statement is experienced.

2. Kant's Sublime :

Sublime is to be found in a object so far as in it or by occasion of it boundlessness is represented and yet its totality is also present to thought.

The Sublime induces a feeling of pleasure only indirectly; viz. it is produced by the feeling of a momentary checking of the vital power and a consequent stronger outflow of them, so that it seems to be regarded as emotion - not play, but earnest in the exercise of Imagination -. Hence it is incompatible with (physical) charm, and as the mind is not merely attracted by the object but is even being alternately repelled, the satisfaction in the Sublime does not so much involve a positive pleasure as admiration or respct, which rather deserves to be called negative pleasure.

For Kant Sublime is both Mathematical and Dynamical.

a) Mathematically Sublime :

Sublime is absolutely great, great beyond all comparison (absolute, non-comparative magnum). It is not permissible to seek for an adequate standard of this outside itself, but merely in itself.

Nothing, therefore, which can be an object of the senses, is, considered on this basis, to be called sublime. But because there is in our Imagination a striving towards infinite progress and in our Reason, a claim for absolute totality regarded as a real Idea, therefore this very inadequateness for that Idea in our faculty for estimating the magnitude of things of senses, excites in us the feeling of a supersensible faculty. Consequently it is the state of mind produced by a certain representation with which the reflective judgement is occupied, and the object, that is to be called sublime.

The Sublime is that, the mere ability to think which, shows a faculty of the mind surpassing every standard of Sense.

Now for the mathematical estimation of magnitude there is, indeed, no maximum (for the powers of numbers extend to infinity), but for its aesthetical estimation there is always a maximum, and of this I say that if it is judged as the absolute measure than which no greater is possible subjectively (for the judging subject), it brings with it the Idea of the Sublime and produces that emotion which no methematical estimation of its magnitude by means of numbers can bring about (except so far as that aesthetical fundamental measure remaining vividly in the Imagination). For the former only presents relative magnitude by means of comparison with others of the same kind; but the latter presents magnitude absolutely, so far as the mind can grasp it in an intuition.

Nevertheless, the bare capability of thinking this infinity without contradiction requires in the human mind a faculty itself supersensible. For it is only by means of this faculty and its Idea of a noumenon - which admits of no intuition, but which yet serves as the substrate for the intuition of the world, as a mere phenomenon - that the infinite of the world of sense, in the pure intellectual estimation of magnitude, can be completely comprehended under the concept, although in the mathematical estimation of magnitude by means of concepts of numbers it can never be completely thought. The faculty of being able to think the infinite of supersensible intuition as given (in its intelligible substrate), surpasses every standard of sensibility, and is great beyond all comparison even with the faculty of mathematical estimation; not of course in a theoritical point of view and on behalf of the cognitive faculty, but as an extension of the mind which feels itself in another (practical) point of view to go beyond the limits of sensibility.

b) Dynamically Sublime is Nature :

Nature considered in an aesthetical judgement as might that has no dominion over us is dynamically Sublime. Might is that which is superior to great hinderances. It is called dominion if it is superior to the resistance of that which itself possesses might. For Kant nature can be regarded by the aesthetical judgement as might, and consequently as dynamically sublime, only so far as it is considered an object of fear.

Man finds limitation in estimation of the magnitude of nature's realm. However there exists in his rational faculty a non-sensuous standard, where infinity under it is as a unity, in comparison with which everything in nature is small, finding thus in his mind in a superiority to nature even in its immensity. Recognising at the same time his physical impotence, the humanity in his person remains unhumiliated though submission to its dominion is inevitable.

Now what about this superiority of man's mind in front of God as presenting Himself in His Wrath and yet in his Sublimity, in the tempest, the storm, the earthquake etc? It would be criminal. No feeling of sublimity of his mind but rather subjectio, abasement and a feeling of complete powerlessness, would be a fitting state of the mind.

Only if he is conscious of an upright disposition pleasing to God do those operations of might serve to awaken in him the Idea of the sublimity of this Being, for then he recognises in himself a sublimity of disposition conformable to His will; and thus he is raised above the fear of such operations of nature, which no longer regards as outbursts of His wrath.

c) Of the modality of the judgement upon the Sublime in Nature :

But in respect of our judgement upon the sublime in nature, a far greater culture, as well of the aesthetical Judgement as the cognitive faculties which lie at its basis, seems requisite in order to be able to pass judgement on the pecularity-----. That the mind be attuned to feel the Sublime postulates a susceptibility of the mind for Ideas. In fact, without development of moral Ideas, that which we, prepared by culture, call sublime, presents itself to the uneducated man merely as terrible.

d) Gurudev's Remarks :

Kant has done more for the Sublime than any other philosopher. His Critique of Judgement is almost the final work about the nature of Sublime.

Inspite, however of Kant's interposition of the sublime between taste and teleology, his description of sublimity remains wonderful.

Translators of Kant's work in English have used the word intuition (Anschauung) in the sense of perception.

3. Otto's Holy :

Otto Rudolf coined the word 'numinous' to indicate that aspect of deity which transcends or eludes comprehension in rational or ethical terms. Numinous indicates the objective reality - the Holy and is not merely a subjective feeling of mind. The only appropriate word. for it is Sanskrit - Adbhuta'.

Holy is purely a *priori* category, with complex rational and non-rational components. Rational components viz. reason, purpose, good will, supreme power, unity, selfhood are designated to it. As these are clear and definite concepts and can be grasped by the intellect these constitute the rational attributes of God. Non-rational side are the miracles envisaged from time to time, occasional breach in the casual nexus in nature by a Being who himself instituted and must therefore be master of it. As Numinous is purely a *priori* category it is to be reached by introspection for in it we are referred away from all sense experience back to an original and underivable capacity of the mind, implanted in the 'pure reason' independently of all perception.

The nature of the numinous can only be suggested by means of special way in which it is reflected in the mind in terms of feeling. The only appropriate expression to describe its name is 'mysterium tremendum'.

In tremendum there is the element of awefulness, the element of overpoweringness, the element of Energy or Urgeney. And by Mysterium is meant "The Wholly Other".

Numinous induces awefulness of such an order let alone tremor, natural man is quite unable to shudder or feel horror in real sense of the word. It is Religious Awe.

Over - poweringness indicates absolute unapproachability. Might, power absolute overpoweringness all can be represented by majesty. One's conscious which has been overpowered in contrast creates a creature feeling, of being but dust and ashes and nothingness all raw material for the feeling of religious humility.

The numinous object has energy or urgency. It is particularly vividly perceptible in wrath exhibiting vitality, passion, emotional ferver, will, force, movement, excitement, activity, impetus.

Mysterium in the religious sense, is that which is mysterious in the 'wholly other' that which is quite beyond the sphere of the usual, the intelligible, and the familiar, filling the mind with stupor - blank wonder and astonishment.

Otto calls the faculty of genuinely cognizing and recognizing the Holy in its appearances as the faculty of divinisation. Divinisation consists in the fact that a man encounters an occurance that is not 'natural', in the sense of being inexplicable by the laws of nature. Since it has actually occured, it must have had a cause; and since it has no 'natural' cause, it must have supernatural one. The transcendent is here proved as strictly as anything can be proved, logically from given premises.

There are two distinguishable values in the Numen. Its fascination will be of subjective value viz. beatitude to man, its objective value of being august, claims his homage, thus transcending True, Good and Beautiful.

a) Gurudev's Remarks Regarding Rudolf Otto :

"I have not seen another Christian who was so open minded and who read and prized the religious books dealing with religions other than his own. Otto has translated the Eleventh Chapter of Bhagavadgita and added it as an appendix to the Idea of Holy being a sublime illustration particularly of the psychology of horror, never written in the West".

4. Intuitively Apprehended Sublime Vision of Cosmic-Ātman by Arjuna

Gurudeva says "In the great theophany in the eleventh chapter of the Bhagvadgita, we are lifted from the earthly region to the celestial, and there brought face to face with the manfestation of God, as he prevades the whole universe-----".

a) Characteristics of the Vision :

i) A Wonderful Manifestation of God :

Arjuna saw that there was neither any beginning, nor any middle nor any end to the vision he had seen. The entire space between the earth and heaven seemed to have been occupied by God. The form of God reached almost the top of the sky, being illuminated with different colours and lights. It had an infinite number of faces and eyes and heads and feet.

ii) The Dazzling Splendour of God :

The Sun and the Moon were his eyes. A blazing fire emitted from his mouth and the dazzling splendour of his form is regarded as equalling the splendour of a thousand Suns, simultaneously illuminating the sky.

iii) The Terror - Striking Form of God :

God was seen with a number of mouths having fangs. All the beings that exist in the world are there shown to be crushed to death with their heads powdered between the teeth. Not satisfied with this, the form of Terrific Death devoured the worlds themselves with flaming mouths and licking tongues for want of satiety.

b) Psychological Feelings Induced in Arjuna :

Arjuna no wonder was full of fear, but there was a competition of the feelings of fear and joy, of pain and bliss.

Fear entered the very marrow of his system and there was a sort of tremor that he experienced, and horripliation accompanied. He lost all sense of direction and neither could he gather courage nor find peace, and the flow of his vital forces seemed to have been absolutely checked.

c) Purpose of the Vision :

Krishna showed him (Arjuna) the vision of the future in which the contending armies and their great warriors were accelerating into the mouth of Krishna, in order that he might be encouraged to fight to the end the battle in which he was engaged.

5. Conclusion :

That God none the less admits access to Himself and intimacy with Himself is not a mere matter of course; it is a grace beyond our power to apprehend, a prodigious paradox. Nonetheless He created man in His image, and man should pay back this debt by creating God in his.

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- N. V. Kulkarni
"Abhay", 27, Savali Society,
Paud Road, Pune-411 038.

कल्लु मेत्तगे माडिकोळ्ळण्णा

(The Kannada Poem composed by the Saint of Nimbargi in the Devanagari Script)

कल्लु मेत्तगे माडिकोळ्ळण्णा । बल्लवन केळि ॥प.॥ कल्लु मेत्तगे माडिकोळ्ळो। कल्लु सक्करेगिंत सवियो । सार अमृत सुरिदु नीनु । ज्ञानज्योति तुंबिकोळ्ळो ॥अ.प.॥ कल्लिनोळगे परुष काणण्णा । परब्रह्मनरियदे । कैय ओळगे बंदीतु ह्यांगण्णा ॥ कल्लुकुट्टिग अल्लमप्रभु । शिलेय ओडेदु सेलेय तेगेद । नीरु नीरु कूडिद बळिक भेदभाव गळ्याक बेकु ॥१॥ कल्लु कल्पवृक्ष काणण्णा । बेडिद फलगळ । कोडुव ब्रीद उंटु नोडण्णा ॥ गुरुलिंगजंगम चरण होंदिगूडो एंदिगगलदे। बेल्ल सवियु कूडिदंते । कूडिकोळ्ळो नीनु इल्ले ॥२॥

Soften the Stone

Soften the stone O brother;
Seek counsel of the wise.
Soften the stone O brother;
Relish the juice - ambrosial
Sweeter than the candy - sugar,
Get drenched in light - enlightenment.
Paruṣa's within the stone O brother;
Should ye oblivious of *Parabrahman,*
How can ye get the "touch-stone" O brother?
Allamaprabhu's the great stone-cutter
Who slit the stone and let the spring out;
When the water mixes with water,
Why then talk of difference O borther?
The stone's the Kalpavṛkṣa O brother !
Rightly has the power to bestow
All the fruits ye ask for O brother.
Thus to the feet of Gurulingajangama
Blend ye intensely with Him;
As the sweetness with the jaggery
Bind ye with Him here and anon.

Transcreated by :

- **Prof. Yashwant Achar,** H.No.45, Heerabagh, Udupi.

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(Continued from last issue)

Bhagwadgeeta & its exposition by Sant Dnyaneshwar

Chapter V ज्ञान योग

Renunciation of action

(Sanskrit Script followed by English translation)

तद्बुद्धयस्तदात्मानस्तन्निष्ठास्तत्परायणः ।
गच्छन्त्य पुनरावृत्तिं ज्ञाननिर्धूतकल्मषाः ॥१७॥

When they themselves, their intellect, their devotion and their thoughts are all absorbed in Brahma alone, and all the impurities (sins) are washed away by knowledge they reach liberation from the cycle of births.

Saint Dnyaneshwar explains -

When the intellect is firmly convinced about the allpervading nature of the Brahma, when he considers himself as part of the Brahma, whose thoughts are always filled with Brahma alone, who exists day and night in Brahma alone, then he sees Brahma filling all things and all beings in the world and he no more differentiates himself from others and others from himself. He becomes one with the world and the world one with him. Just like thoughtful reasoning does not know what is delusion, or the sun does not know what is darkness or the moonlight is devoid of warmth or the eternal does not know demise, similarly those endowed with this knowledge of Brahma do not see any difference between different beings. Such persons escape the cycle of births and join eternity.

कल्लु मेत्तगे माडिकोळ्ळण्णा

(The Kannada Poem composed by the Saint of Nimbargi in the Devanagari Script)

कल्लु मेत्तगे माडिकोळ्ळण्णा । बल्लवन केळि ॥प.॥ कल्लु मेत्तगे माडिकोळ्ळो। कल्लु सक्करेगिंत सवियो । सार अमृत सुरिदु नीनु । ज्ञानज्योति तुंबिकोळ्ळो ॥अ.प.॥ कल्लिनोळगे परुष काणण्णा । परब्रह्मनरियदे । कैय ओळगे बंदीतु ह्यांगण्णा ॥ कल्लुकुट्टिग अल्लमप्रभु । शिलेय ओडेदु सेलेय तेगेद । नीरु नीरु कूडिद बळिक भेदभाव गळ्याक बेकु ॥१॥ कल्लु कल्पवृक्ष काणण्णा । बेडिद फलगळ । कोडुव ब्रीद उंटु नोडण्णा ॥ गुरुलिंगजंगम चरण होंदिगूडो एंदिगगलदे। बेल्ल सवियु कूडिदंते । कूडिकोळ्ळो नीनु इल्ले ॥२॥

Soften the Stone

Soften the stone O brother;
Seek counsel of the wise.
Soften the stone O brother;
Relish the juice - ambrosial
Sweeter than the candy - sugar,
Get drenched in light - enlightenment.
Paruṣa's within the stone O brother;
Should ye oblivious of *Parabrahman,*
How can ye get the "touch-stone" O brother?
Allamaprabhu's the great stone-cutter
Who slit the stone and let the spring out;
When the water mixes with water,
Why then talk of difference O borther?
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ये हि संस्पर्शजा भोगा दुःखयोनय एव ते ।
आद्यन्तवन्तः कौन्तेय न तेषु रमते बुधः ॥२२॥

The pleasures derived from the contact of senses with their sense objects are merely the seeds of misery and are transient with a beginning and an end, therefore, oh Arjuna, the wise do not rejoice in them.

Saint Dnyaneshwar explains -

One who has not experienced the bliss of the Self, will feel the cravings of the senses towards their objects, not knowing that these pleasures are transient, having a beginning and an end. Thirsty dears run towards the mirage, which appears to them as water, but as soon as they reach the spot, they know that they are overcome by delusion.' The flash of lightning does not serve any purpose for work as it is too short-lived. The clouds cannot give a permanent shelter against the heat of the sunlight and wind. The hood of the cobra cannot provide a cool peaceful shade for a mouse. The bait looks attractive to fish only till it bites it. Similarly, the sensual pleasures are delusive and only sow the seeds of misery. Therefore, those who have experienced the bliss of the Brahman in their inner being do not even turn to look at the sensual pleasures. Only those who are not even aware that there is an eternal bliss are deluded and stuck in the mire of transient sensual pleasures. Therefore, oh Arjuna, the wise do not rejoice in them.

शक्नोतीहैव यः सोढुं प्राक्शरीर विमोक्षणात् ।
कामक्रोधोद्भवं वेगं स युक्तः स सुखी नरः ॥२३॥

That man who is able to withstand the impulsive drive of lust and anger before death overtakes the body is a yogi and one who is happy in his life.

Saint Dnyaneshwar explains -

A man who is determined to attain knowledge is engrossed in his goal and has no time to look at sensual pleasures. Being one with his goal he is able to withstand and abstain from the impulses of lust and anger. This oneness with the goal of knowledge destroys the ego and prepares the man to reach the bliss of the Brahman. When a potful of water is poured in the sea, we cannot see it separate. When the wind disappears we are aware of the sky only. Likewise, when the ego is destroyed, the mind dissolves in the Self and the man is one with joy of Bliss.

यो अन्तःसुखोऽन्तरा राम स्तथान्तर्ज्योतिरेव यः ।
स योगी ब्रह्मनिर्वाणं ब्रह्मभूतोऽधिगच्छति ॥२४॥
लभन्ते ब्रह्मनिर्वाणमृषयः क्षीण कल्मषाः ।
छिन्नद्वैधा यतात्मनः सर्वभूतहितेरताः ॥२५॥

One who feels happiness in his inner being, recreation in his inner being and whose existence is illuminated by the inner flame of the Self is a yogi who attains liberation and eternally stays in the state of Brahman.

The rishis or sages whose sins and imperfections are washed clean (by tapas), whose doubts are removed by knowledge, who have overpowered their senses, who always think of the welfare of all beings, attain liberation and reach the Supreme Brahman.

Saint Dnyaneshwar explains -

Only that man who himself has realised the Self, can know the true signs an attributes of such a person. Such persons are manifestations of the Divine. They are moulded as statues of pure Bliss. They are examples for others to see what is meant by Self-Realisation. Those who dived to the deepest in the ocean of Brahma, remained there itself as Brahma. He who sees the whole world in himself has attained Parabrahma, though existing in the body. That Bliss which can be expressed as par excellence, eternal and unlimited, is deserved only by desireless persons like the seers, sages and renunciates and is freely available for all the individuals who can attain that maturity, by dissolving all their doubts and dualities, overpowering the impulses of just and anger and always making efforts for the welfare of all beings.

कामक्रोधवियुक्तानां यतीनां यतचेतसाम् ।
अभितो ब्रह्मनिर्वाणं वर्तते विदितात्मनाम् ॥२६॥

For self-realised persons who are free from lust and anger, who are renunciates and have subdued their minds, can quickly attain Brahma-nivarna.

Saint Dnyaneshwar explains -

Those who turned away from the senses, subdued their mind and dived deep into the ocean of Brahma, do not want to return to the worldly state. If you ask me how they attained such a state, though remaining in the body, I will tell you briefly in my further explainations, so, hear attentively.

स्पर्शान् कृत्वा बहिर्बाह्यांश्चक्षुश्चैवान्तरे भुवोः ।
प्राणापानो समौकृत्वा नासाभ्यान्तरचारिणी ॥२७॥
यतेन्द्रिय मनोबुद्धिर्मुनिर्मोक्षपरायणः ।
विगतेच्छाभय क्रोधायः सदा मुक्त एव सः ॥२८॥

Not permitting the perception of the outside world by the senses that is leaving them outside only, fixing the eyesight between the eye brows on the inside, *equalizing the inhalation and exhalation breaths which flow through the nostrils and the inner parts (i.e. throat & chest), (by kriya yoga); the ascetic who, has subdued the mind and intellect, orienting himself towards the goal of liberation, becoming desireless, fearless and free from anger, attains liberation once and for all times.*

Saint Dnyaneshwar explains -

Shutting off the inner senses to the outside world, concentrating the mind and directing the eyes between the eyebrows and behind where the Ida, Pingala and Sushumna that is the left, right branches and the central column of the spinal chord meet, when both the nostrils are breathing equally, the kundalini that is the flow of cosmic energy enters the medula oblongata like the river meets the ocean and all thoughts of ego & desire disappear, the individual mind dissolves into the Universal mind and the ascetic attains liberation once and for all and experiences oneness with Brahman, though within the body.

भोक्तारं यज्ञतपसां सर्वलोकमहेश्वरम् ।
सुहृदं सर्वभूतानां ज्ञात्वा मां शान्तिमृच्छति ॥२९॥

One who knows me as one who accepts all the sacrifices and austerities as the Lord of the whole universe (the three worlds) and the friend of all beings, attains peace.

Saint Dnyaneshwar explains -

Shrikrishna tells Arjuna - I told you before that some persons attained Brahma though alive in body, understand well that it was through this path of yoga. They crossed the mountains of moral and mental discipline, introspection, and the sea of the practice of meditation to reach Samadhi and liberation.

Arjuna said that the path of yoga you told just now is simple like climbing a few steps rather than swimming across the deep waters. Bhagwan Shrikrishna replied that as you have liked it so much I will tell the same in detail in the next chapter. So ends the fifth chapter named Karma-Sanyas Yoga through Dnyana Yoga of Shrimad Bhagwadgeeta.

(To be continued)

- P. D. Dharwarkar
188, Guruwar Peth, Tilakwadi,
Belgaum-590 006.

□□

Christ in the Universe

No planet knows that this .
our wayside planet, carrying land and waves
Love and life multiplied, and pain and bliss,
Bears as chief treasure one forsaken grave.
Nor, in our little day,
May his devices with the heavens be guessed;
His pilgrimage to thread the Milky way,
or His bestowals there be manifest.
But in the eternities
Doubtless we can compare together, hear
A million alieu gospels, in what guise
He trod the Pleiades, the Lyre, the Bear.
O, be prepared my soul !
To read the inconceivables, to scan
The myriad forms of God those stars unroll
When, in our turn we show to them a man

- Alice Meynell (1847-1922)
(A Mystical Catholic Poet
in Christ in Universe)

Reflections on the Mystical Experiences of Sri Nimbargi Maharaj

Sri Nimbargi Maharaj

Sri Nimbargi Maharaj / The saint of Nimbargi (Circa 1790-1885) - the founder of Nimbargi Sampradaya is a great modern mystic who stabilized his experience of the Self and oriented this experience with the Supreme Reality. Although the saint of Nimbargi kept his spiritual life secret from the rest of the world, quite a few prominent followers of Nimbargi Sampradaya have culled out some of his experiences primarily from his sayings, poems (composed in Kannada on different occasions). These extracted spiritual experiences of Sri Nimbargi Maharaj constitute a *Kalpa-Vṛkṣa* (wish-tree) or a *Paruṣamani* (philosopher's stone) or a *Purusa* (God as a person), *Pañchavadana* (five-faced God/one form of Lord Śiva) Divine Music, Divine Name, Divine Light, Ambrosial Juice, Macrocosmic and Microcosmic forms of God. The present paper reflects on these spiritual experiences of Sri Nimbargi Maharaj in a concise manner keeping in mind that at times some of them overlap and amalgamate.

Sri Nimbargi Maharaj has composed a poem titled, *Kallu mettage mādikoḷḷaṇṇa,* 'brother, soften your stony heart', in which he describes the functions of *Kalpa-Vṛkṣa* as below.

The saint of Nimbargi tells us that God might manifest Himself to us in the form of the *Kalpa-Vṛkṣa or Paruṣamaṇi* 'philosopher's stone'. You will see the *Kalpa-Vṛkṣa* inside your heart, and when you have seen it, all your desires[1] will be fulfilled, whatever they might be. This is the real meaning of *Kalpa-Vṛkṣa.* You will be able to see a *Paruṣa* or a *Puruṣa*[2], both readings are there. You can see either a Philospher's stone inside the heart, or God as a person inside yourself. It matters little whether it is *Paruṣa* or *Puruṣa*; both result in the same thing. (Ranade 1960:241-42) Great mystics have a reverential regard towards their spiritual experiences. From this point of view *Kalpa-Vṛkṣa* and *Paruṣamaṇi* can be brought under the categories of Dendrolatory (worship of trees) and Jewelatry (worship of jewels) respectively. Of course, *Paruṣa* is a kind of anthropomorphic mystical experience. Hereafter, two other anthropomorphic mystical experiences of Sri Nimbargi Maharaj can be narrated.

Sri Bhausaheb Maharaj, Umadi

The saint of Umadi (an ardent disciple of Sri Nimbargi Maharaj) maintains that *'Samarth'* (competent or capable) is one who has "seen" the spiritual form of his own Self from feet to head and that Sri Nimbargi Maharaj had such a constant[3] spiritual vision of himself, from feet to head i.e.; 'आपादमस्तक' (apadmastak), and therefore, he attained the status of 'समर्थ' (samarth) (vide for details Tulpule 1965:88).

One of the most prominent lady disciples of the saint of Umadi is Sri Shivalingavva-a poetess saint of Jat and a spiritual sister of Gurudeo R. D. Ranade. Sri Shivalingavva used to tell that Sri Nimbargi Maharaj actually visualised God in the shape of *Panchavadana.* It is clearly evident in Sri Nimbargi Maharaja's song *aṅdilla swāmi iṅdilla, eṅdigādaru nimmannagali nailla, 'neither then, Oh Lord, nor, now, never have I been seperate from you'.* In this song Sri Nimbargi Maharaj says, "if Thou art *Paṅchavadana,* if you are endowed with five faces, it is my duty to believe in your feet, *pāda naṁbide nānu".* (Vide for details Ranade 1960:148-149). Now, the attention can be focussed on Sri Nimbargi Maharaj's experiences with respect to Divine Music, Divine Name, Divine Light.

Sri Vishnu Bhadaji Nimbargi is a disciple of Sri Rambhau Yaragattikar Maharaj and is one of the prominent disciples of Sri Nimbargi Maharaj. Vishnu Bhadaji once went to Devar Nimbargi carrying his *'Ruḍra Veeṇā'* (a kind of Indian lute) and played it in front of Sri Nimbargi Maharaj. Thereafter Sri Nimbargi Maharaj remarked, *"Ruḍra Veeṇā* utters as we utter. One may play *'Ruḍra Veeṇā'* to the perfection of its tune akin to human utterances. But *Brahma Veeṇā* (Divine Music) is superior to *Ruḍra Veeṇā.* You perform Bhajan on it *(Ruḍra Veeṇā)* but not for monetary gains". (Kulkarni 1995-212).

'Divya Nama' means Divine or Sublime Name or real Spiritual Name. It was brought by Sri Nimbargi Maharaj from heaven to earth. It is The Name, which is conveyed by the spiritual teacher to his disciple at the time of the latter's initiation into spiritual life. It comes directly from the God and is communicated to the disciple as 'God in posse' (Ranade 1960:184).

The saint of Umadi used to tell that as soon as the saint of Nimbargi imparted his Divine Name to his disciples, the latters used to see Divine Light in front of their eyes. (*Vide* for details Kulkarni 1995:122). This is an example of an amalgamation of audic (phonic) and photic mystical experiences.

In one of his songs and two sayings, Sri Nimbargi Maharaj makes a clear reference to photic mystical experiences. Sri Nimbargi Maharaj advises in one of his songs, *Jñāna jyotiyoḷage nalidu,* you should revel and nod reflexly in the light of illumination. It is not necessary for one to do any voluntary effort for it. (Ranade 1960:105).

It is essential to consider the two following sayings of Sri Nimbargi Maharaj about 'Divine Light'. Sri Nimbargi Maharaj says : "The light, which is seen at the time of meditation is *Ātman.* He should always be the guide to be followed in every undertaking..... (*Vide* for details Gajendragadkar, Bhagawat 1975:96).

Sri Nimbargi Maharaj states, "Everything is in the hands of Ātman. Nothing happens without His will. So he should be propitiated by continuous meditation and you should always see his light. God has given eyes to you for this purpose only". (Gajendragadkar, Bhagawat 1975:96-97).

Time and again Sri Nimbargi Maharaj talks not only about photic mystical experiences but also about ambrosial juice. However, I confine to three of his songs in which the saint of Nimbargi indicates the experience of ambrosial juice.

The saint of Nimbargi tells us first, in the song, *kallu mettage mādi kollaṇṇa* that the hearts of all of us are like stones and advises us to make mellow our stony hearts. Unless you make them mellow, there is no entrance for you into the spiritual life. For that you must approach a spiritual teacher like Allamaprabhu, slit the rock and let out the spring, *'allamaprabhu śileya oḍedu selaya tagedu'*. When this spring began to flow, it flowed with ambrosial juice. So, a great stone cutter *(kallu kuttiga)* like Allamaprabhu broke open the hearts of all those who were stony hearted and let loose the spring of spiritual experience, ultimately resulting in the flow of ambroisal juice..... Finally, the saint of Nimbargi tells us that *nīru nīru kuḍida baḷika bheḍab hāvagaḷyāka bēko,* 'when water mixes with water, why talk of difference ?' Self and God will merge themselves into one another as water into water (*Vide* for details Ranade 1960:241-42).

The next song by Sri Nimbargi Maharaj viz; *'nellu kuṭṭuṇu bāramma', 'let us, thrash paddy, dear lady'* tells us how we have to begin with taking away the husk from rice in the first instance, ultimately to enjoy the rice dishes, the spiritual juice in the company of our spiritual teacher and our spiritual brethern. There is a continued culinary metaphor from the cleaning of the rice to the preparing of the spiritual dish'. This is the essence of the poem (*vide* for details Ranade 1960:245-46).

In the third song, the saint of Nimbargi exhorts us to 'hum like a bee on the lotus feet of his master' *guru caraṇa kamaladalli bhṛnganāgo nī*... What the bee does is to hum round the lotus with a view to finding out and gathering honey. So, it is the business of the disciple to hum round the lotus feet of his master and suck as much honey as he can. In a nut-shell we should partake of the ambrosial juice of the spiritual experience i.e. *swānubhavāmṛta savidu* (*vide* for details Ranade 1960 : 104-05).

Finally, I turn to *Nirbayalu* (macrocosmic) and

Spiriton (microcosmic) mystical experiences of Sri Nimbargi Maharaj.

Elsewhere, I have referred to Sri Nimbargi Maharaj's song *andillā, swāmi indillā, endigādaru nimmannagali nanillā,*. In the same song, Sri Nimbargi Maharaj states, "If you pride yourself on being called *'Nirbayalu*[5]*'* spaceless or infinite I take pride in calling myself *'nirvikāra'* (dispassionate). But both are negative in character. Negative must be met by negative (Ranade 1960 : 148).

Regarding the microscopic spiritual experience, Sri Nimbargi Maharaj makes the following observation in one of his sayings :

"You may not reach height of spiritual experience. For this a Muslim mystic (Murid) has a saying "As even a tiny opium seed floats in the sea, the tiniest spiritual experience is enough to carry you through the cycle of birth and death. Saint Tukarama says of spiritual experience, "Any amount do gather - Twelve seers, half or even a quarter seer". A Kannada proverb states, 'Even if a sign of God is seen, then you would never be born again. "These mystics later live happily blessed with progeny, wealth etc. And as they advance in their experience of the light of *Ātman* illuminated form, they get absolution even during this life and become one with *Ātman.*

Thus, if you extract Self from human body and see Him in this birth only, you will not be born again on this earth. There is no doubt about this." (Gajendragadkar, Bhagawat 1975:98).

Thus, it is evident from the above account that a rich variety of mystical experiences of Sri Nimbargi

Maharaj and the authoritative interpretations of them by the founder and prominent personalities of Nimbargi Sampradaya can guide and inspire those who tread the Pathway to God.

Notes :

1) The Saint of Nimbargi, in one of his poems observes, "....When a master like you is there to protect me on all the four sides no wonder if I get everything I desire....". (Gajendragadkar, Bhagawat 1975:105).

One of the sayings of Sri Nimbargi Maharaj is as follows "*Swarājya* means the unending bliss of the Realization of *Ātman.* No want is ever felt, while ruling over this Kingdom. In this Kingdom, there is ever increasing joy, without the slightest tinge of sorrow...." (Gajendragadkar, Bhagawat 1975:80).

2) Sri Nimbargi Maharaj states, "If you term that Reality a boy, I will call it a girl. You name It a girl and I say, a boy". (Sangoram : 1995 : 287). Contradictions vanish in mystical experiences.

3) "...Constant spiritual experience is also a good company ...if you are in the company of the Immutable you yourself will become Immutable" (Gajendragadkar, Bhagawat 1975:88).

4) "...When that mixture of rice and sugar and milk is being boilt, there will be an uncontrolled over-flow of conceit". *'Kuḍiyuva samayadalli maḍaḍa ukku barutāladamma.* Then by the ladle of equanimity 'or *'Samata'* put down that over-flow. Do not allow the foam to spill (Ranade 1960:246).

"One should not be proud of one's achievements in spiritual life also, if so, then the spiritual experience will be diminished. Those willing to lose the experiences are welcome to be proud" (Gajendragadkar, Bhagawat 1975:42). Thus according to the Saint of Nimbargi one must guard against egoism in spiritual life.

5) Prof. R. D. Ranade (1959:92) stresses, in all cases of Infinitude, an element of Divinity as, for example in the बेहद् of Kabir and निर्बयलु of Kannada saints.

In his lectures of Karnatak Mysticism, Prof. Ranade (1997:442) has spoken about the relation of बयलु to निर्बयलु, बयलु meaning space and निर्बयलु meaning spacelessness. As however बयलु or space may be taken to be equivalent to the void, what would be the conception of निर्बयलु which transcends the void ? It might be a void beyond the void, which may not therefore carry any scientific value. The first void should be enough for us, call it बयलु or निर्बयलु, as you please.

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- Prof. **K. B. Dabade,** M.A., Ph.D.
House No. 9, Hirabaug.
Udupi - 576 103.

(Continued from last issue)

Eternity Compressed in Time :

My Reminiscences of Shri Gurudeo

Shri Gurudeva gives another illustration of the flux or perpetual change as an incentive to spiritual life as depicted in a famous Doha viz., 'पाती झड़ती देखते... धीरी बावलियाँ'. When the old foliage of a tree is falling down, the new foliage laughs at it. The old foliage retorts : "Be patient oh foolish fresh foliage. Thou wilt have soon to follow". The old foliage also addresses the tree which seems to be unmoving and unchanging, "Even thou, oh tree, will have to follow the same universal law. ......Some day the same inexorable necessity will overtake you also. God has ordained that one goes ahead, and another follows."

फिर भी पाती यूँ कहे, सुन तरुवर एक बात ।
सैंया ऐसा सिरजिया, एक आवत एक जात ॥

Shri Gurudeva regards this Doha as an excellent illustration of Nigaraṇa Alaṅkāra, for the leaves and the tree stand here both for themselves as well as for members of an institution and the institution itself When the old head of an institution is retiring, the new head may laugh at him. The old head retorts, "Be a little patient, oh new head, you will have to follow the same law. Remember, even the so-called institution to which all of us belong, will have some day to follow the same inexorable law. Nothing abides in this world. All things change." Shri Gurudeva reminds the students of philosophy "the greatest apostles of the doctrine of flux are Herecleitus in olden times, and Bergson in modern. Bergson says, There is a cinematographic change in all things. Nothing stands still." Herecleitus tells us, "The Sun that shines today will not be the Sun that will shine tomorrow." "You cannot put your foot twice in the same waters," he says, "for when you go to put your foot a second time in the water, the water has already run off."

Shri Gurudeva illustrates the momentariness of all things in the world when he considers a third Doha viz., क्षणभंगुर जीवन की कलिका, कल प्रात को जान खिली न खिली ।
.....कह ले हरि-नाम अरी रसना, फिर अन्त समय पै हिली न हिली ॥

"Even now, oh tongue, begin to utter the Name of God, for thou dost not know whether thou will be able to move at all at the time of death. Uncertainty prevails universally. One cannot be certain whether the bud of this evening will blossom into a flower tomorrow, or the foetus in the womb of a mother may be born as a child or come out still dead." Again, "the sleep which a man is enjoying on a particular night, might also mean Biblical sleep or death," says Shri Gurudeva.

The second incentive to spiritual life as contained in the Dohas is drawn from considerations of decrepitude and destruction. Shri Gurudeva explains this incentive with the help of three Dohas, which impress us by an increasing 'Nirveda', depicted by them. The first Doha asks us for the solution of a riddle.

'कच्चे में तीका लगे, गदरे बहुत मिठाय ।
इक फल है ऐसा सखी, पाकि गए कडुवाय ॥'

This Doha poses a riddle (पहेली), and seeks its solution. "What is that fruit which is liked when it is raw, which tastes extremely delicious when it comes to a half-ripe condition, and which becomes bitter when it fully ripens?" The solution of the riddle, of course, is that the fruit is the human body. A person in his childhood is liked by everybody; in youth he is loved ardently, and in old age he is the target of hatred for everybody. Thus the Doha depicts the first stage of 'Nirveda'.

The second Doha enumerates the five stages of existence of a person.

"कहँ जाये, कहँ अपने, कहाँ लड़ाये लाड ।
कहाँ विराजै राज सों, कौन खाड़ में हाड़ ॥"

"O man", asks the Doha, "just consider how you came into the womb of your mother, and then you came out of it. As a child you became an object of endearment for everybody, and were fondled. Later in youth, you reached the zenith of your prosperity and power, and after having done all this, your ultimate fate is to be consigned as a mere mass of bones into a ravine, creak or river." Shri Gurudeva remarks, "This should fill you with the consideration as to whether you have given a proper account of your life."

The third Doha, wherein Kabir tells us that he is filled with consternation and concern at the sight of dead bodies being cremated, depicts the state of 'Nirveda' at its peak :

हाड़ जरैं ज्यों लाकड़ी, केस जरैं ज्यों घास ।
जगत पजरता देखि कै, कबिरा भया उदास ॥"

Bones burn like wood, hairs glow like burning grass. Kabir is filled with sadness to the brim at the sight of funeral pyre, where whole world is destined to be burnt in blazing fire.

In this context, Shri Gurudeva gives a classification of philosophers who have sought the spiritual life. There have been three kinds of such philosophers, the sad, the weeping and the shouting philosopher. The present Doha of Kabir entitles him to be called a "sad philosopher". Tukarama and Ramadasa, says Shri Gurudeva, may be described as the weeping and the shouting philosophers respectively. It is reported that Tukarama and Ramadasa met each other at Pandharpur on the opposite banks of the Bhima River. As Ramadasa, with his band of disciples was coming from the other side of the river, Tukarama went with his disciples from the side of Pandharpur to receive him. Tukarama began to weep and Ramadasa began to shout. Naturally the disciples of these two great saints asked them as to what prompted them to act so strangely. Tukarama said that he was telling the world with tears in his eyes that they should leave away their futile mundane pursuits and follow God, but nobody listened to him. Ramadasa said that he was shouting to the world that the course they were following was a vain one, but nobody listened to him also. After giving this classification, Shri Gurudeva remarks, "yet none of these characteristics would ultimately belong to these great saints. Behind the semblances with which they approached humanity for its spiritual upliftment, there was the attitude of a potent Beatificism which was the very core of their beings." (Pathway to God in Hindi Literature, p.315).

After considering the different incentives leading to the pursuit of spiritual life in the Hindi *Pada* and *Doha* literature, Shri Gurudeva comes to two songs by Surdas and Kabir which tell us that "the pursuit of God alone will enable us to transcend the evils implied in these incentives." (Ibid.75). In the song Surdas points out that when your dear old relatives have once passed away, you will never, by any means, be able to get into contact with them. "Is it possible for leaves that have dropped down to get stuck up again to their parent tree or to one another?... You will have to look in helpless frenzy when death is snatching away your only dear child," says Surdas stressing man's utter helplessness in the face of invincible power of death. "In your own case, finally," says Surdas, "when towards the end of your life you will be in your delirious state, caused by the morbid condition of the bodily humours, your throat will be chocked up by phlegm, your tongue will falter and fail, and you will not be able to utter a single word. One moment in such a state will appear as the aeon of time." Shri Gurudeva quoting Surdas, advises man, "Leave away your arrogance, Oh foolish man. Spiritual life alone will save you from helpless submission to death. Let your mind rest steadfastly on the feet of God." Shri Gurudeva tells us that Kunti had asked of Krishna in the Mahabharata exactly such steadfast surrender of her mind on the His feet instantly :

"कृष्ण त्वदीयपदपङ्कजपञ्जरान्ते ।
अद्यैव मे विशतु मानसराजहंसः ॥
प्राणप्रयाणसमये कफवातपित्तैः ।
कण्ठावरोधनविधौ स्मरणं कुतस्ते ॥"

At end of his discussion Shri Gurudeva mentions three points contained in the song 'रे दिल गाफिल गफलत मत कर' by Kabir. "Pilgrim as you are Oh man, you have not been able to reach even the outskirts of the City of Devotion. (प्रेम-नागर का अन्त न पाया), and you will have to return as you come." Further, "You have taken an extremely heavy load on your head and are sitting in a wrecked boat. You are sure to get drowned in the river of life." Then pointing out the necessity of establishing an urgent alliance with God, he says, "your friend God is standing on the other side of the river.

Why do you not make Him the pole star of all your attention and effort ?

'परली पार तेरा मीता खड़िया, उस मिलने का ध्यान न धरिया ।
टूटी नाव ऊपर जा बैठा, गाफिल गोता खावेगा ।।'

In this context Shri Gurudeva recalls similar ideas expressed in the following utterances of Jnaneshvara :

या लागि शतजर्जर नावे ।
रिगोनि केविं निश्चिन्त होआवें ।...
तेविं लोका येऊनि सोपद्रवा ।
केविं न भजिजे मातें ।।

तरि झडझडोनि पाहिला निघ । इये भक्तीचिये वाटे लाग । जिया पावसी अव्यंग । निजधाममाझे ।। and Shri Gurudeva takes this opportunity to present ideas contained in Jnaneshvara's passage, which begins and ends with the lines quoted above, because these ideas "would serve an independent commentary on the different incentives dealt with so far. Jnaneshvara remarks, "Life is indeed a fair, where the wares of misery are being spread out and allocated by fate. When you are seeing that a conflagration is surrounding you in a forest, would it not be an act of prudence on your part to get out of it as early as possible?" He, then, tells us, "you are indeed sleeping on a bed of scorpions. How can you ever hope to sleep in comfort ? Avaricious and inconsiderate, you are like a frog which is trying to eat a fish while it is itself being devoured by a big boa." Then pointing a finger towards the nature of the world as a passing show, Jnaneshvara tells us, "All things in this world are transitory. The moon of this world is proverbially consumptive. Stars rise in this world only to set, and birth only means death. .... Death indeed is like a lion's den to which all steps point, but from which none returns." "परतले पाउलनी नाहीं किरीटी."

Finally, Jnaneshvara tells us, "Histories and mythologies are merely stories of dead men. Why do not these considerations prompt you, Oh vile man, to the pursuit of spiritual life ? The whole world is full of misery. Who has ever heard a tale of happiness in this mortal world ?" (Ibid. pp. 80-81).

(To be continued)

- Prof. **M. L. Sharma**

115, Malviya Nagar, Jodhpur-342 011.

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A stone falls into the water and creates disturbing waves. These waves oscillate backward and forward till at last... the water returns to its condition of calm and tranquility. Similarly all action, on every plane, produces disturbance in the balanced harmony of the universe, and the vibrations so produced will continue to roll backward and forward... till equilibrium's restored.

- H. P. Blavatsky

Importance of Realisation of one's Self in Nimbargi Sampradaya

Shri Nimbargi Maharaj, Shri Bhausaheb Maharaj Umadikar and Shri Gurudeo Ranade belong to the Nimbargi Sampraday which follows the method of meditation on God's name to attain God-Realisation or Self-Realisation. The origin of this Sampradaya can be traced to the Nath-Sampradaya of Gorakshanath through Shri Datta, Revannath, Kadsiddha, Marulasiddha, Ekoramsiddha, Panditaradhyasiddha & then Muppinmuni and Gurulingjangam or Nimbargi Maharaj. This sampradaya has also combined in itself some traditions of the Wārakari Sampradaya & Samarth Sampradaya. This Sampradaya has thus included twelve abhangas (stanzas) of Tukaram in its daily recitation system as well as discourse on Dasbodh of Samarth Ramadas Swami. The streams of the three Sampradaya traditions viz. the Nath, Warakari and Samarth have thus met together as the confluence of the three rivers of Prayag, where Gurudeo Ranade, Known as the Panini (the famous grammarian) of Spiritualism, stayed for twenty long years.

The all inclusive behaviour of the Nath Sampradaya irrespective of caste creed or religion and the moderate attitude of the Wārakari Sampradaya have merged together in the Nimbargi Sampradaya. Gurudeo

Dr. Ranade had the mystic experience of the God's name in Hindu, Muslim, Parsi and Christian religions. Nimbargi Maharaj, though himself a Neelvani Lingayat, had disciples who were Lingayats as well as Brahmins. The Wārakari Sampradaya rebelled against orthodoxy and ritualism and all people mixed together with the Godly feeling in their heart disregarding outward personal appearances. God's name was of supreme importance overriding all other personality characteristics. The Nimbargi Sampradaya does not encourage renunciation and becoming a Sanyasin nor ritualistic worships with outward restrictions like fasting etc., The only rule is to regulate the repeatation of name with the exhalation and inhalation of breath to control the waverings of the wandering mind. The Sampradaya also solved the problem of whether to worship the attributeless God or the God with triple attributes by saying that God can manifest in both divine forms and that the worship with Bhajans, reading the scriptures or discourses constitute the worship of God appearing with the triple attributes while meditation on the name constitutes that of the attributeless God.

To realise one's own soul / The Self is the sole goal with the prayer to lead one from darkness to light and help one progress up the spiritual ladder. There is no restriction on which God's name one utilises for meditation for spiritual progress. If the name is one proved by mystic experience of the Guru, so far so good and preferable. Guru is thus given the greatest importance as said by Saint Kabeer. "If Guru stands on one side and God on the other, the devotee should first offer salutations to Guru as he is the person who made the vision of God possible for the devotee". Gurudeo Ranade's devotion towards his Guru Bhausaheb

Maharaj was exceptional and on a very high level so as to fit the description of devotion towards the Guru given in the 13th Chapter of Dnyaneshwari. Even then Ranade and Amburao had all the humility and refused to be called a Guru and allow the devotees to put their head on their feet for salutation for a long time, till they were intuitionally ordered to do so by their Guru on his behalf.

Sri Amburao Maharaj

Inner cleanliness, moral calibre and firm faith in God are of extreme importance as the foundation for spiritual progress in this Sampradaya. It then follows without saying that visiting the sacred places, temples of deities, prayers for overcoming worldly difficulties or gaining righteousness are not given any undue importance. To go around all these places forsaking the daily routine of meditation is considered harmful to the spiritual practice.

In the practice of spiritual progress, yogic powers and miracles have no place. To be after yogic powers and miracles is taken as straying away from the enjoined path of spiritual progress and unnecessary obstacles. Bhausaheb Maharaj used to say that those who has realised Godhood, can contact other person's mind, but things like make the wall walk or make a buffalow talk are unnatural things, which they cannot do. Nimbargi Maharaj used to say that there is no power greater than moral behaviour (Bodh-Sudhė). If our moral behaviour is spotless, even Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh cannot do anything wrong to us and if the moral behaviour is not correct, even all the three together will not be able to do any good to us. Our behaviour towards the woman or wealth that belongs to others should be exemplary.

Gurudeo Ranade is said to pay for the ink and pins used for personal work in a govt. office every month.

Though a man behaves with high morality and ethics and follows the practice of meditation regularly, he has to face some dreadful unexpected circumstances in life. Though Bhausaheb Umdikar Maharaj used to say that meditation burns away the Prarabdha Karma it is experienced that it cannot disappear completely and the Karma or the law of compensation applies to the series of births man has undergone and the deeds committed by him during all of them. Complete faith in God who looks after the welfare of all beings in thus essential for spiritual progress. Prof. N. G. Damle has rightly defined the nature of this Sampradaya as Bhakti-yoga or devotional practice originating in spiritual knowledge, based in morality, culminating in mystic vision of God through the practice of meditation on God's name. The practice of Hath-yoga, Raj-yoga, Yogasanas, Yoga-mudras etc. followed by the Nath-Sampradaya are not considered important. It starts with the preparation of the body and mind at the lower level and rises to the top i.e. Godhood. While devotion to God starts with God himself through regular meditation on God's name. Gurudeo Ranade has praised this method by saying that "No other method exists for the spiritual progress (नान्यः पन्थाः विद्यते अयनाय)

Regular practice of meditation brings in transformation from the inner most being of man, taking away the consciousness from the body to the inner being, the mind & then the soul leading to Self-Realisation. Some Sampradaya adopt the worship of God through the mental perception by first perceiving the image of God and then follow the rituals of worship of the God.

Gurudeo Ranade used to say that one should not imagine any image of God from the beginning of the meditation but wait for the image to appear of itself. He used to call such a Self-appearing image as "the thing" or "Vastu", and said that it appears from beyond the perception of senses. The blind devotee Shri Lingappa Sawalagi used to see the Vastu before his blind eyes. The sound without the physical compression or friction (Anāhat) is heard from beyond the senses. & not by ears of skin. Sant Namdeo used to say the blind used to see the vision and the man who has lost the talking faculty will utter the words to the ears of the deaf.

This Sampradaya does not believe that Realisation is achieved only when one sees the mythological form of God. In the beginning one may see only a point of light (Bindu or spiriton in Gurudeo Ranade's words) and later on get the mystic experience of forms as pearls, gems, a cobra, a Shiva-ling of bright light, lightning, moon, sun, which can be called forms of light or might be in form of colours as red, blue, violet, yellow etc. or sound forms as sounds of a bell, conch, flute, clapping during Bhajan, vibrating ankle ornaments of a dancer, the thunder of the clouds etc., or various types of smells or tastes on the tongue without any apparent reason. These are all preliminary experiences of a spiritual seeker, who has to proceed with his efforts ceaselessly taking these experiences only as lamp-post on the way. This Sampradaya says that, even in the end, there is some smallest distance between the Self and the God, like that between the moon of the 14th day and full moon day. There is no stage nor any reason for an ego to say that he has become God. This Sampradaya does not believe that a disciple or devotee gets the mystic realisation by mere touch of the Guru. He has to make his own efforts with firm determination to reach the goal.

Philanthropic donations, arranging mahaprasads, reading scriptural texts, circumbulations around the deity etc., might all be considered as righteous activities; but they may not bring the intuitive mystic experiences of the spiritual seeker. On attainment of the goal of meditation, one is said to see his own image as seen in a mirror, which is Self-Realisation itself. However, this is not an event that takes place all of a sudden, but is a culmination of long-time meditational efforts.

Self-realisation is the vision of the Self, the soul coming out of the gross body and appearing before the seeker in his image in a sphere of light. The upanishads say the same as follows : "अस्मात् शरीरात् समुत्थाय परं ज्योतिरूपसंपद्य स्वेनरूपेण अभिनिष्पद्यते सोऽयमात्मा ॥" Sant Tukaram says that he gave birth to himself out of his own body. The eyes see the own image playing as a child. Samarth Ramadas says "Listen to the sign of knowledge. Knowledge means knowledge of one's own Self; seeing one Self is that knowledge" Thus to see one Self without a mirror, have one's vision, is Realisation. Such a seeker attains the power of the Creator, sees the past as well as future as a film on a screen, he can know thoughts in other minds, his speech utters only the truth & thus becomes a Realised Soul (Siddha Purusha). He can weild power over the five elements, he can die only at his will, he sees everywhere the all pervading form of God and remains in Bliss all the time, having a direct immediate firsthand intuitive apprehension of God.

Reaching the stage of a Siddha-Purush (Realised man) is the fruit of a ceaseless long effort of meditation on the God's name proved by the mystical experience of the Guru who gave the same to the devotee and the meditation done while keeping a very high moral and ethical level and great respect to the giver of the name. Reaching the Realised state, freeing oneself from all bondages, utilising the spiritual power for the good of the humanity and attaining the aim of one world, one religion and one God for the welfare of all beings, a dream visualized by Gurudeo Ranade.

This Sampradaya gives a clarion call to all humanity to follow this path of Self-realisation through meditation on the God's name. Its peculiarity lies in crossing all the limiting boundaries of the variety of religions, dynasties castes, languages nationalism and sex-differentiation and its speciality in showing the destination of the all-pervading might of the creator by following the moral and spiritual values. This pathway to God is no doubt relevant in retrieving the situation of falling values in the sociey due to spread of fundamentalism and fanaticism and turmoil in the whole world.

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- Dr. Sudhakar S. Deshpande M.A., Ph.D.
5/5, Chandrashekhar C. H. S., Swami Nityanand Marg,
Andheri (E), Mumbai-400 069.

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Book Review

Karma : *Rhythmic Return to Harmony, Edited by : V. Hanson, R. Stewart & S. Nicholson, Published by : Motilal Banarasidass Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, (India). Pages 291, Price Rs. 295.*

The book is a comprehensive compendium contributed by twenty five authors who are authorities in their own branches of philosophical & religious thoughts, psychology, astrology, yoga etc., Their contributions are in the form of excerpts from their published books related with the topic of this book. The sanskrit term "Karma" was originally in the Indian, Buddhist and theosophical society literature. The term cannot be separated from the idea of rebirth and incarnations. Originally it was used to mean the effort of the actions good or bad of previous births having effect on the destiny or the behavioural pattern in the present birth of the individual. However, with the interest and deep studies by many scholars and intellectuals, the term "Karma" has been adopted as the all-embracing term for the universal law, the harmonic law of adjustment, of compensation, action-reaction to which all natural processes of life are subject. The ramifications of the law are understood to be endless and complex as those processes; yet in its ultimate simplicity, the law is harmony, the perfect relationship which obtains between all things everywhere in life.

It has become increasingly clear in recent years that we live in an interconnected, holistic universe, in which "all things everywhere" are interdependent. In this context, it is more evident that not only the past and future are interconnected but events flow in the "Whole" where movements at any level of life affects all other levels. This current view of holism, which is held by many scientists, ecologists, philosophers as well as esotericist can easily accomodate the concept of Karma as the universal law of all things in life because of an organic linking of the whole of cosmic experience, a linkage which is such that all events in the cosmos are bound together in one harmonious correlation.

In the overview of life implicit in much of modern thought, the concept of Karma seems almost inevitable. Considering Karma as it relates to such areas as western psychology, social problems, spiritual growth, even economics, throws new light on this ancient concept. The articles in the book would enrich one's understanding of this simple yet complex law that operates continually in our lives and in the world.

1. Understanding Karma :

Felix Layton begins by examining the most fundamental aspects of this principle of Karma and its balancing role in the lawful order of nature. Drawing upon the frequently made comparison with Newton's third law of motion that every action has an equal and opposite reaction, he shows how Karma is likewise a natural law with its own subtle physics that we can understand and consciously workwith. Shirley Nicholson points out the less deternimistic, more organic side of the law, drawing analogies from nature that illustrate how Karma is subject to the modification of newly emerging influences and that it is multidimensional in nature, rather than purely linear and rigid. Emerson in his classic essay, addresses the subtle qualities of Karma-like compensation seen through nature in the inter-relations of creatures and elemental forces. Especially in the lives of humans we see a sense of lawfulness in which every excess causes a defect, every defect an excess, and all seems governed by "the deep remedial force that underlies all facts." Leslie Smith considers same facts of the Karma in the context of reincarnation as causes develop over successive lives. Aldous Huxley portrays the concept of Karma through the eyes a twentieth century intellectual. He reminds us that the process of Karma cannot by itself deliver us from the bonds of time that this can be achieved only through our. own efforts and right conduct. Clarence Pederson concludes with a look at Karma in the larger context creation, ethics and mystical union.

2. Karmic Principles in World Religions :

The concept behind the term Karma comes from India, where it has played a vital role in Hindu Philosophy for thousands of years. Yet similar concepts can be found within cultures and religious systems throughout the world expressed in a variety of ways. Joseph Goldstein looks at Karma in Buddhism and considers the importance of compassion and mindfulness in approaching this doctrine. Anand Coomar Swamy addresses the problem of how Karma connects with the specifically Buddhist doctrine of no-self : if there is no independent Self, how can Karma be transmitted from life time to life-time ? Haridas Choudhuri. discusses the philosophy of integral Yoga as developed by Arabindo, emphasizing that we humans can learn to co-operate with law of Karma in its roll of forwarding cosmic evolution. Geddes MacGregor looks at Karma in the light of Christian teaching and addresses several questions and objections commonly raised by Christians regarding Karma. He shows how Karmic ideas can be found in Christian scripture and also discusses the relation of Karma to the Christian concept of grace. Edward Hoffman, in the context of Kabbalistic mysticism, discusses such Jewish notions as tikun (to make whole) and gilgulim (incarnation) and their relation to Karma and dharma (one's mission)

3. Karma, Psychology and Astrology :

Historically, the concept of Karma reached its greatest development within the cosmological and psychological world view of Hinduism. Yet the emergence of spiritual and transpersonal ideas in the contemporary Western Psychology offers the opportunity to gaining new insights into the ancient doctrine. The essays explore Karma in a psychological setting and also looks at ways it has influenced modern astrological thought. Harold Coward discusses the theory of Karma in the light of transpersonal and Jungian psychology and the important role it played in Jung's formulation of the theory of archetypes. Roger Woolger focuses an Karma as it helps explain psychological scars (saṁskāras) and the formation of major complexes over successive life times. Psychologist and astrologer Stephen Arrogo looks at the important connection of both Karma and modern psychology to the astrological chart, which, he argues, can be seen as a diagram of one's past Karmas and the psychological tendencies they suggest for this life time. Liz Green discusses the larger question of Karma and its relation to the ideas of fate and destiny as they have unfolded in the Western thought, focusing particularly on astrology's place in this still developing debate.

4. Social Dimensions of Karma :

While we may experience Karma most directly on the personal level, we cannot fully understand it until we see its collective dimensions as well, for like individuals, groups incur Karma and develop Karmic patterns. Individual Karma is played out within the larger context of group Karma and may at times even be severely modified by it. Diana Dunningham Chapotin addresses ways we are affected by our cultural environment and explores the question of whether there can be ever be unmeritted suffering in the life of an individual. William Metzger explores ways Karma functions as we make choices on social questions such as abortion and medical intervention for those near death, stressing that consideration of the good of collective whole naturally arises from recognising one's intrinsic link with the One Life. Anna Freifeld Lemkow discusses the implications for personal and collective Karma arising from recent advances in modern physics and systems theory. Alfred Taylor, noting the almost miraculous advances in the health field in recent decades, examines the question of whether Karmic debts can ever be truly be eleminated, and suggests that the only genuine effective means of lessoning the Karmic suffering of others is through a deep spiritual empowerment. George Linton discusses various aspects of Karmic theory and concludes by asking that we consider more closely the implications of aligning ourselves with various groups and their respective Karmas.

5. Beyond Karma :

As a law of nature, Karma affects us all spiritual and mythological traditions have long shown that to ignore or defy it is to court disaster. Yet the esoteric traditions also suggest that we can in various ways mitigate or even transcend the binding effects of Karmaic law. The essays explores this process of transcendence from a variety of view points. Dane Rudhyar speaks to the relationship of Karma and dharma or duty and of the way in which Karmic conditions can be transformed through spiritual awareness. Virginia Hanson discusses the principle of grace and how it might be understood within the framework of traditional Karmic theory. Christopher Chappel considers the importance of purification, renunciation, and detachment as traditional steps in the practice of yoga that move one toward transcendence. Ray Grasse describes the relationship between Karma and the esoteric yogic doctrine of the chakras, and suggests techniques to neutralize Karma by working with the chakras and their energies. Lawrence Bendit stresses the importance of one's personal reaction to Karma and of consciously harmonizing oneself with the cosmic whole, essential steps in the process of moving beyond Karmic limitations.

This scholarly book is a valuable asset to all those who want to study the universal law governing the behavioural patterns of individuals, groups and societies as also the Whole Life in this world.

- P. D. Dharwarkar
188, Guruwar Peth. Tilakwadi.
Belgaum-590 006.

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Activities of A.C.P.R.

Quarterly Report for the period ending 31-3-2002

Lectures :

1) We had a very interesting, analytical lecture with in-depth study on "Philosophy of Religion" by our Divisional Commissioner Mr. B. A. Coutinho, IAS, Belgaum on "Philosophy of Religion". Philosophy is an integral inseparable and important part of Religion, on which the mutual cordial relationships of human beings are based. However over the long course of time, philosophy paled in the background and superficial ritualism came to the fore, with the result that the human relationships deteriorated. The lecture was very well attended and highly appreciated by the audience. The lecture was held on saturday the 19th Jan. 2002.

2) A lecture by Yogacharya Patwardhan of Pune on "Yoga Sadana" was held (in Marathi) on 2-2-2002.

We wel-come the following New Subscribers to Pathway to God Journal. (Each Rs. 75/-)

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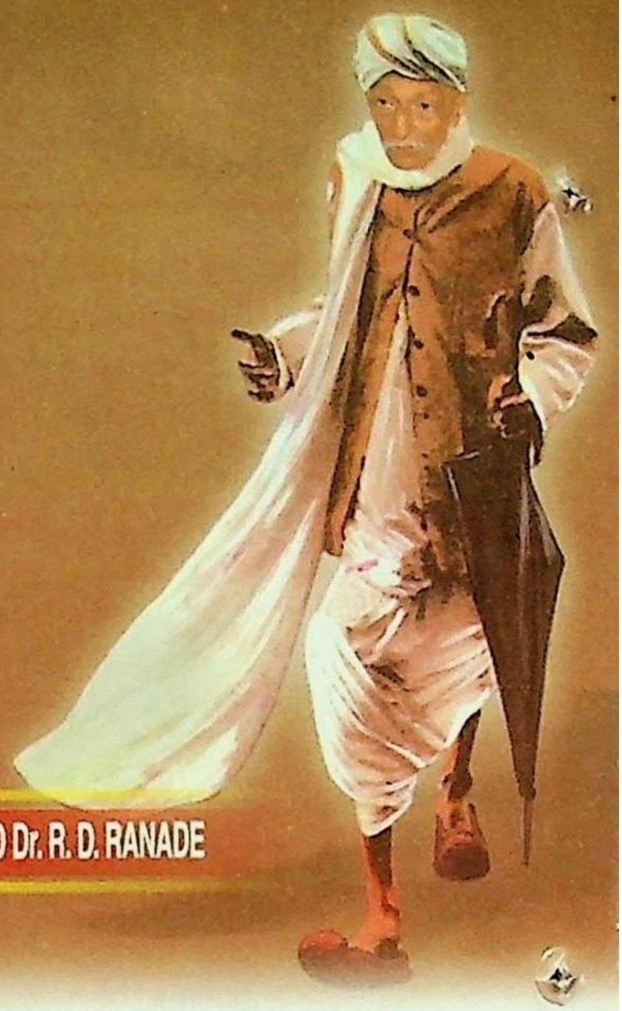

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